



Friday, May 4: We drove from Taormina to Siracusa in the morning. After getting just a "little bit" lost and trying to get directions in a town that has never seen a tourist, we finally found Limonetto, a family farm just outside Siracusa where we spent the next three nights.



Sharon and the wild papyrus at the Fontana Aretusa

Dancing in the park!



We spent Friday afternoon and evening exploring the island of Ortygia, the oldest part of Siracusa founded in 734 B.C. by the Greeks. Giorgio and Raimundo (Giorgio is the horse) gave us a two hour tour of the island in broken english (Raimundo's) and broken Italian (Gary's).





Ortygia is a pleasure to walk around. The whole island is about a square mile of narrow streets, crumbling buildings and beautiful piazzas. We noticed several posters that announced a procession and mass on Sunday for the feast of Santa Lucia so we made plans to return on Sunday night.







Saturday, May 5 was rainy and chilly and we were on our way to Caltagirone and Casale. All through Sicily we had been seeing literally millions of wildflowers ... we were so taken by a roadside view of cows in a field of yellow flowers that we just had to stop and admire the scene.



Caltagirone is famous for its ceramics. After negotiating some incredibly narrow and winding streets, Gary found a parking space right at the foot of the Scala di Santa Maria del Monte. Each of the 142 steps is decorated with hand-painted ceramic tiles and no two are the same. The stairway and the surrounding neighborhood are lined with ceramic workshops.







After visiting several ceramics studios, we had lunch at a restaurant on the steps, then headed for the town of Piazza Armerina to visit the Roman villa at Casale.



The early 4th century A.D. Roman villa at Casale is Sicily's most important Roman ruins. It is justly famous for the incredible array of mosaics on the floors of the four groups of connected buildings.

